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Gemmeria

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Gemmeria (or **Gemmera**) is a semi-autonomous province of the Nilfgaardian Empire, once an independent kingdom, located south of Ebbing—the northernmost frontier of the Nilfgaardian sphere and the last country considered Nordling, both by Nordlings themselves and by Nilfgaardians, even after Ebbing became a vassal state of the Empire.

For centuries, some Nordling cartographers mistakenly claimed Gemmeria to be the southernmost reach of the Old Continent, arguing that the lands beyond belonged to another, separate landmass. Most others, however, held

Gemmeria

Flag of Nilfgaardian Gemmeria

General information

Variation(s)	Gemmera

Ebbing as the continent's true southern boundary.

By the time of the Second Northern War, these disputes had been settled. Nordling geographers realized the error stemmed from Gemmeria's peculiar geography: the presence of an inland sea, the so-called Sea of Gales—or *Môr vid Gwynt*, as the Gemmerians called it—which had long confused earlier mapmakers and given rise to the belief in a southern rupture of the land.

Status	Kingdom (formerly) Nilfgaardian Province
Ruler	Imperial Governor Puppet King
Societal information	
Official Language	Nilfgaardian Language
Demonym	Gemmeran Gemmerian
Religion	Great Sun

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Climate

Gemmeria's climate is peculiar, shaped above all by its unusual geography. In broad terms, it is warmer than the Nordling lands to the north, yet cooler than the Nilfgaardian heartlands to the south.

The province's *"double sea"* exerts the greatest influence. Though the Giant Shoulders mountain chain blocks much of the oceanic air from the west, there are natural gaps in the range that allow maritime winds to spill inland. The combination of the Great Sea and the inland Sea of Gales creates a macro-oceanic climate across most of the region, with the notable exception of the arid south.

A typical Gemmerian landscape

This results in mild overall temperatures with little seasonal oscillation, the surrounding waters acting as a stabilizing buffer. Seasonal shifts do occur, but rarely in extremes—fluctuating by only one or two degrees.

Rainfall is abundant year-round, feeding Gemmeria's forests and steppe grasslands. Winters are typically wet and short-lived: snow, when it comes, often melts quickly unless accompanied by sleet or hail, which can linger longer.

Culture

General Outlook

The culture of Gemmeria is often summed up in a single phrase: *the law of the strong*. At its core it is barbarous, guided more by the club than by the pen. Yet within this harsh ethos lies a paradox: once a foreigner earns a Gemmerian's attention (though not always their respect) they may find them strikingly cordial and sincere. However, to anger them is to risk violence and cruelty in equal measure.

The plains of their homeland have shaped Gemmerians into exceptional riders, famed for galloping their hardy stallions with passion and pride. But the same skill has long fueled brigandage and raiding, the seizure of others' property being viewed as proof of strength, a way to earn respect within a group, and a demonstration that the weak deserve no better.

This mentality even gave rise to a grim saying beyond Gemmeria's borders: "*to play in the Gemmerian way*." The phrase refers to the province's darkest tradition —a brutal gang rape in front of the victim's family. Though both sexes could be targeted, women suffered this fate most often, making it one of the most infamous aspects of Gemmeria's reputation.

Piracy was likewise common, particularly on the Sea of Gales. Gemmerian pirates were infamous not only for being harsher and crueller than their kin on land and even the Skelliger pirates of the Great Sea, but also for displaying surprisingly refined manners in comparison. Many were women, hardened by the brutality of their male compatriots and finding greater independence at sea. Their ferocity soon gained such renown that, during the Nilfgaardian conquest, the Empire placed *exorbitant* bounties on their heads—dead or alive. Once Gemmeria fell, many of these pirates turned to waging guerrilla war against the Imperial occupiers, haunting coastlines and supply routes for decades. Their resistance was driven by a fear—well-founded, as history proved—that the Empire would destroy their freedom and thus, the way of life they had once known.

Accent

When speaking Common Nordling, Gemmerians are instantly recognizable by their distinctive accent—much like the peculiar intonation of the Commonwealth. The Gemmerian accent is characterized by its smooth, flowing pronunciation, with a particular emphasis on the "*zh*" sound.

Unlike the harsher, clipped consonants typical of Aedirnian, Gemmerian speech favors fluidity and a more melodic delivery. Words containing the "*zh*" are often elongated or accentuated,

giving the language a unique aural quality that sets its speakers apart across the Old Continent.

Art

Gemmerians are not generally known for artistic pursuits. Their cultural mentality often regards those inclined toward the arts as overly sensitive, and therefore ill-suited to thrive in their harsh, strength-driven society. Yet the common stereotype of Gemmerians as uncultured barbarians who mock the arts in all their forms is far from accurate.

In fact, they hold deep reverence for certain expressions, particularly music, literature, and sculpture. This came as a surprise to Nilfgaardians after the conquest. Gemmerian songs are renowned for their harmonies—so intricate that they rival and often surpass the works of Nordling and Imperial bards or even opera composers. Their written works, characterized by complex tales with multiple twists, range from mostly accurate chronicles to full-length novels, often centered—whether to glorify or to vilify—around notable Gemmerian figures. Their sculpture, meanwhile, achieved such refinement that even the famed Kovirian stonework appeared primitive by comparison.

This appreciation was nowhere more evident than in the royal court at Goleunimawr, where an entire hall was dedicated to statues of Gemmeria's kings, each sculpted not only in likeness but to depict the very manner of their often glorious deaths.

Music, too, reflected this esteem. One notable tradition was the Musical Pass: an unwritten law requiring innkeepers to provide any bard—local or foreign—with food and lodging for at least a week.

Cuisine

The cuisine of Gemmeria is characterized—at least to foreign palates—as being "*excessively salty*." It relies heavily on the consumption of fish of all kinds, with particular emphasis on both white- and red-fleshed varieties.

The use of spices is common, though not as prevalent as in its northern neighbor, Ebbing. This is partly because several minor spices grow locally thanks to the climate, and partly because, being further south, Gemmeria receives more frequent visits from trade ships coming from Zerrikania, Melukka, and Ofir, as well as products from the more southern reaches of the Empire.

As a land where root crops are abundant, these are a staple accompaniment to fish, alongside certain vegetables suited to the macro-oceanic climate.

A typical Gemmerian plate

At least one high-proof alcoholic drink is known to exist, called taro (Gemmerian: *hit*), brewed from fermented ginseng. Other alcoholic beverages are also produced from various root crops, sometimes blended together into a single drink.

Despite the presence of buffalos, their meat is not commonly consumed, as these animals are valued for multiple tasks and dairy production. When they die, however, every part of the animal is used—including the hide, which is crafted into clothing.

Currency

Before Nilfgaard's conquest, Gemmeria's currency was the laiska (Gemmerian: *leaf*), named for its shape, which resembled the needle of a pine tree. The coin was long and narrow, with several protrusions extending from its sides—a design thought to have been loosely inspired both by pine leaves and by the golden laurel crowns once worn by emperors of the ancient Imperium.

The laiska's high value derived from its electrum composition, though its worth was never standardized on a national scale. Instead, it functioned as a divisible unit: users would break off one or more of its side protrusions to pay for services, while the straight central piece—remaining after all had been removed—was reserved for extremely costly transactions.

After Nilfgaard's annexation, the floren was imposed as the official currency. Yet the laiska never entirely vanished. Recast in silver and copper, it survived as a secondary coinage, used for smaller, everyday exchanges—buying food, paying for an inn, or other modest expenses.

Education

Despite being considered by many as a primitive kingdom, Gemmeria for a time showed greater commitment to education than other countries of the western coast. This was largely influenced by the long-term vision of the greater good that the Nordling druids serving as advisors to the various monarchs promoted.

Thus, convinced by the premise that such a program was both to strengthen the kingdom and to solve internal problems quickly, as well as to effectively repel invasions from nearby neighbors, an educational program was established in the mid-to-late 12th century, loosely inspired by the one carried out by King Griffin of Temeria. Its purpose was to provide literacy and basic combat training to the entire male population. The program reached an approximate success rate of 70%. The remaining 30% failed due to the ultranationalist policies of King Pwvyllo II, who condemned the program as "*excessively foreignizing*." This led to a decline to around 40%, which, together with other factors, proved decisive in Nilfgaard's conquest of 1226.

After this, beyond the academies—including the magical ones, the General School of La Pointe, the College of Musical Arts of Kharkiv, and the small university in the capital, where the upper classes could be trained from the basics to the most complex subjects if they could afford the costs—little to no formal education bodies existed. Only after the conquest did some small schools funded by Nilfgaard begin to appear in different villages and towns, where both sexes

could access basic education beyond reading and writing (and basic combat training in the case of boys).

Family

Family, far more than in many other societies, is the central pillar of Gemmerian life. This is largely rooted in the province's long history as a patchwork of small states, often tribal in nature.

A typical Gemmerian family consists of the father, the mother (or mothers, in some cases), their children, and usually the grandparents. Occasionally, the siblings of the parents are also considered part of the household—especially if one parent dies. Most often this occurs when the father passes away, in which case the mother will traditionally marry her late husband's brother.

Justice

Though the empires that passed through the region introduced systems of law and formal codes, in daily life Gemmerian justice has remained simple, effective—and often brutal. It can be summed up in a single principle: *an eye for an eye*. This practice was only curbed (though never eradicated) with the arrival of Nilfgaard.

For example: if someone steals, their hand is not cut off as in certain northern countries such as Lyria & Rivia or Aedirn, but instead they are compelled to repay the victim with something of equal value. If one person kills another, the victim's family has the right to kill the murderer or a member of their family. If someone accepts a bribe and is caught, they must surrender both the bribe and any money they carry at the time to the authorities, and so on.

Mentality

The constant conflicts of Gemmeria's past—combined with a subtle Nordling imprint left by the Sangreal Empire—shaped a society ruled above all by the *law of the strong*. Even after Nilfgaard's conquest, this mentality has endured, marking Gemmerians as a people often seen as raw and brutal.

Reserved by nature, yet at the same time unable to keep from speaking their minds exactly as they see things, Gemmerians despise and conceal pain, treating it as a sign of weakness—a rotten apple in the basket. Physical strength and mental toughness, paired with extraordinary resilience and an unbreakable willpower—even if fueled solely by hatred toward an enemy—are valued above all else.

This has produced a society capable of immense communal solidarity when it chooses, yet one that often withholds it because of its reserved disposition and uncompromising honesty. In such a world of extremes, one may find the most loyal friendship, the purest love, and the most venomous hatred to be found anywhere on the Old Continent.

Misogyny

Gemmeria is widely regarded as one of the most misogynistic lands of the western coast—surpassing even Kerack and Lyria & Rivia in the North. This condition stems from a fusion of various early and later cultural traditions and the already mentioned ingrained mentality.

In Gemmerian society, women are not considered second- or even third-class citizens, but rather objects—reduced to the impulsive desires of men. From this attitude arose the already mentioned province's most infamous custom: the practice of collective sexual assault in front of the victim's family. Such acts were inflicted not only to mark "*possession*" of the victim but also to humiliate them, stripping both the individual and their kin symbolically of strength. Particularly notorious was the practice of subjecting a rival's wife to this fate while he was forced to watch; the humiliation ran so deep that suicide of the rival was a frequent outcome.

Yet Gemmeria's law of strength contained its own contradictions. Within this brutal framework, certain women managed to rise above oppression. By demonstrating resilience, skill, and eventually some form of power, they could secure independence and earn grudging respect, protecting themselves from male violence. Beyond the feared pirate women of the Sea of Gales, one of the most notable figures was Eira Canwrrhew, remembered in the North as *Eira Frostsinger*. She attained the eminent role of court sorceress to the last king of Gemmeria, wielding authority equal to her male peers until Nilfgaard's conquest abolished the monarchy and replaced it with an imperial puppet.

Non-humans

Because of both their history and their *law of the strong* mentality, Gemmeria never developed systemic discrimination against non-humans. If prejudice exists, it is directed not at species but at weakness itself—and weakness, in Gemmerian eyes, can be found in any race, no matter how humanlike or alien.

That said, certain races do bear the brunt of this ethos more than others, depending on their physical traits. Gnomes, for instance, often suffer greater scorn for being small and slight, while at the other end of the spectrum, witchers are held in unusually high regard, admired for their strength and resilience—core elements, as mentioned before, of the Gemmerian values.

Polygamy

Though not widespread, polygamy is not stigmatized in Gemmerian culture. Its acceptance stems primarily from the region's high rate of maternal mortality during childbirth. It is therefore not uncommon for a man, after the death of his wife in childbirth, to take two or more wives of childbearing age—often by force—to secure his lineage.

Culturally, this is justified by the belief that a wife's death in childbirth proves her "*weakness*" while affirming the "*strength*" of the man's seed, thus granting him the right to take as many wives as needed to ensure descendants.

However, this practice is only accepted for men explicitly seeking to father children. For those who do not desire children, or who engage in polygamy without expressing such intent, the custom is regarded as a sign of weakness and moral corruption. Such cases often lead to exile, and in the most extreme situations, violent retribution ending with the man—and sometimes his wives—put to death.

Respect for Nature

Shaped by their mentality—especially the *law of the strong*—the influence of elven culture in the distant past, and centuries of small states often tribal in nature that preceded later imperial conquests, the Gemmerians developed a deep respect for the natural world. This reverence was reinforced by the arrival of Nordling druids fleeing southward, driven from their homelands where their craft was deemed "*obsolete*" and an obstacle to societal progress.

In Gemmeria, however, druids found a place of honor. For generations, much like in the North back in the day, they served as community guides, advisors to the local nobility, sages, and healers of the sick. This made the Gemmerians a people who always sought to balance the exploitation of nature with the land's ability to replenish itself—a principle that, despite Nilfgaard's harsh laws, changed little even after the conquest.

Yet progress eventually reached Gemmeria as well. With conquests such as that of the Nordling Sangreal Empire, and later the spread of more or less standardized courtly models along the western coast, based the majority on the legacy of the Sangreal Empire, foreign influence took root. Mages gradually assumed the role of primary advisors to the nobility, their pragmatism often favored over the druids' adherence to the old, sometimes impractical ways. Though never replaced outright, druids were relegated to secondary positions—still respected for their ancient wisdom, but no longer holding the same authority in Gemmerian society.

Slavery

Unlike their Aen Elle forebears—and contrary to some of the stereotypes attached to them—Gemmerians did not practice slavery. In fact, true slavery only entered the province with Nilfgaard's conquest.

What they did practice, alongside the standard forms of feudal serfdom, was a peculiar form of "*temporary servitude*." Under this custom, a prisoner of war, criminal, or generally anyone deemed weak would serve another in all capacities for a variable length of time. This service would last until, by Gemmerian cultural standards, the individual was either considered "*strengthened*" and thus released—for Gemmerians believed that the acquisition of foreign or "*weak*" material, once worked upon, did not weaken the country but made it stronger—or perished in the process of becoming strong.

This practice applied primarily to men, who, once released, could either be naturalized as Gemmerians if they were foreigners, or else resume their old lives or begin anew.

For women, however, the situation was far grimmer. Captive women were rarely freed. Instead, they often became unwilling consorts or mothers to Gemmerian lords, excused only from the hardest labor but otherwise bound to remain. Over time, some developed reluctant bonds or even affection toward their captors, though many more endured lives of coercion.

Weapon Laws

As in several countries of the North, it is common in Gemmeria for people to carry weapons everywhere. Some even say it is more strongly encouraged than in the North. The difference with places such as Wyzima, for example, lies in the fact that the carrying of weapons (at least weapons of considerable size) is limited only to men, while women may only carry daggers, gases, or similar arms.

After the Nilfgaardian conquest, this practice was regulated, and in many towns—unless for reasons of profession—it was prohibited. However, the custom more or less endured in those areas considered less vital to the southern empire.

Writing System

Despite common assumptions, the Gemmerians used an alphabet of their own. Its origins lay in the script employed by the Aen Elle to write *Ellylon*. This heritage put Gemmeria under particular scrutiny—not only because the language itself survived in use until 1165, attracting Nordling scholars, but also because the same alphabet continued in use, becoming a key tool for deciphering elven texts.

In the borderlands with their northern neighbors, the Modern Nordling Alphabet was employed alongside the local script, a hybrid practice that persists to this day.

The Gemmerian Alphabet

After Nilfgaard's conquest, the Imperial alphabet became dominant, though in many areas it was combined with the local or Nordling systems depending on the region.

Etymology

The region long lacked a unified name, for obvious reasons: throughout most of its early history, it was divided into numerous small states, often tribal in nature. Only with the rise of the Sangreal Empire did the territory receive a collective designation.

It was then styled Gemmera, derived from the verb in Common Nordling of *gemmer*, meaning *to incise a pine tree to collect resin*. The name reflected one of the area's main exports under Sangreal dominion, as resin from its pine forests became a valued commodity traded across the empire.

Demographics

Compared to other provinces and vassal states of the Nilfgaardian Empire—or even most countries of the Old Continent—Gemmeria is sparsely inhabited. Its vast territory holds barely one million people, scattered across small towns and long chains of villages. Even the capital, unlike the bustling metropolises of Nilfgaard capital or Novigrad, is little more than a large town rather than a true city.

Of this population, roughly 60% are ethnic Gemmerians. The remainder is divided among 20% Nordlings—some descended from settlers of the Sangreal Empire, others from later waves of migration, the latter especially concentrated in the north along the Ebbing border—10% non-humans, primarily gnomes from the Tir Tochair Mountains along with smaller numbers of dwarves, Aen Seidhe elves who emigrated from the North, and some Aen Nílfe elves who survived the fall of their Golden Empire by migrating back in the day, to Gemmerian lands, and 10% Nilfgaardians, composed of administrators, soldiers, and colonist families sent from the imperial core.

Arnaghad, founder of the Bear School. One of the most famous Gemmerians.

Physically, Gemmerians stand at a midpoint between the Nordlings and the true Nilfgaardians—yet with distinct traces of the region's elven presence, visible beyond their language and ruins.

They are generally tall people, particularly the men. A notable example is Arnaghad, founder of the School of the Bear and among the tallest witchers ever recorded—an enormous man who stood well above two meters. By contrast, Gemmerian women were often strikingly small, with most averaging between 1.40 and 1.55 meters in height and rarely surpassing 1.60. This disparity contributed, in part, to the harsh treatment they endured under Gemmerian male brutality. Exceptions did exist, however, and on rare occasions women reached or even exceeded the stature of men.

Their skin is typically fair to medium in tone, with coastal populations displaying a faint olive-bronze tint due to sun exposure.

Hair colors range widely. Blonde and light brown shades dominate, including ash blonde, beach blonde, and darker chestnut hues. Red hair appears neither rare nor common, varying from bright orange to deep copper. More unusual elven-derived colors occur here with greater frequency than in the North: pink, blue, green, and other striking tones.

A similar diversity is seen in eye color. While the most common shades are human norms—grey, amber, blue, and green—it is not uncommon to encounter Gemmerians with orange, violet, pink, and other extraordinary hues.

Economy

Gemmeria's economy has remained varied yet fundamentally simple throughout its history. The vast majority of production belongs to the primary sector, divided almost evenly between fishing, livestock, and agriculture. The province is especially renowned for its root crops—potatoes, sweet potatoes, tiger nuts, and ginseng—alongside distinctive exports such as the gravy sauce and the famously hard buffalo cheese (Bubalus gemmeriensis).

A dimeritium ingot, one of the key exports of Gemmeria

However, the region also possesses abundant underground resources, the most important of which is dimeritium, the anti-magic metal. The dwarven presence in Gemmeria, predating later migrations from the North, attests to the early recognition of these riches. Mining has therefore played a role since antiquity. Already in the age of the Imperium—when the south of the region fell under its sway—Gemmeria's deposits of dimeritium were known and exploited, marking the beginning of a tradition that would later define the province's strategic importance under Nilfgaardian rule. In the Sangreal Empire period (9th–11th c. A.R.), however, the economic focus shifted toward the timber industry. Vast logging operations supplied the dynasty's needs, and it was this trade in pine resin and lumber that gave Gemmeria the very name by which it is known.

With Nilfgaard's annexation in 1226, mining resurged on a massive scale. Dimeritium was the chief motive for conquest: Emperor Fergus var Emreis, coveting Gemmeria's rich seams, gathered his resources and—supported by forces from Etolia and Vicovaro—invaded the country. The campaign devastated a big part of the population, uprooting entire communities and leaving little behind but wandering goat herders in the rocky regions. The Empire prioritized the extraction of dimeritium above all else, establishing numerous mines and fortified outposts to secure the supply of the precious anti-magic metal.

Beyond dimeritium, Gemmeria is home to a variety of rare ores: marfilium, a natural white metal famed for its exceptional hardness; green gold, often confused with electrum but marked by its deep green-black hue; atheridium and bolonium, a softer ore of astonishing durability, long dismissed by foreigners as "*Gemmerian barbarian tales*" until its existence was confirmed. Alongside these rarities, more common but still precious metals such as nickel and platinum are also mined.

On the coast of the Sea of Gales, quarries of calcium, gesso, and marble have been established, together with saltworks. The latter not only serve local needs but also support the preservation and export of Gemmerian foodstuffs, sustaining a modest yet reliable trade network within the Empire and beyond. Gemmerian salt, in particular, became prized as far north as the Hengfors League.

Examples of Gemmerian Names

Ethnic Gemmerians traditionally bear names drawn from their hybrid tongue, marked by a vocabulary with heavy Elder Speech influence (later in the article). By contrast, Gemmerians of Nordling descent often use names that may or may not follow native Gemmerian forms, but their surnames typically reveal their distinct ancestry.

Even after the Nilfgaardian conquest, this distinction largely persisted. The most notable changes fell upon ethnic Gemmerians, whose surnames were slightly altered under imperial influence (see below). Nordling Gemmerians, on the other hand, rarely adopted Nilfgaardian connectors such as aep or var.

Examples of ethnic Gemmerian names include *Abbran Dŵrtywyll* or *Murwenna Rhyfelwr*. Examples of Gemmerians of Nordling descent include *Dacre Silifant* or *Yuz Jannowitz*. Occasionally, as with purely Gemmerian names, Nordling Gemmerian surnames could derive from toponyms—though without the use of connectors. An example would be *Rispat La Pointe*.

Male Names

Abbran, Aled, Alun, Alwyn Anddrii, Aneirin, Aneurin, Arnaghad, Arsen, Artem, Arwel, Arwyn, Avhütt, Awstin, Bedwyr, Bert, Berwyn, Bleddyn, Brynmor, Cadell, Cadeyrn, Cadfael, Cadwgan, Cadwaladr, Cadwgan, Caerwyn, Caradoc, Cefin, Cledwyn, Colwyn, Cynfelyn, Cynog, Cyprian, Cystennin, Dafydd, Dai, Dariuw, Deiniol, Deiriuwe, Delwyn, Dewi, Dilwyn, Drystan, Dylan, Eifion, Einion, Eirwyn, Emlyn, Ercwlff, Eurig, Evan, Ffransis, Folant, Gareth, Geraint, Gaiseric, Gerring, Gethin, Glyn, Glyndwr, Goronwy, Gruffudd, Guto, Gwallter, Gwil, Gwilim, Gwydion, Gwynfor, Haul, Harri, Heddwyn, Hefin, Huneric, Howell, Huw, Hywel, Ianto, Idwal, Ifan, Ifor, Illtyd, Iolo, Islwyn, Llew, Llewellyn, Madog, Martyn, Meical, Meirion, Meredydd, Merfin, Meuric, Meurig, Mihangel, Mostyn, Myrddin, Neifion, Nye, Ofydd, Owain, Owen, Padrig, Ponderic, Pryce, Pryctt, Pryderi, Reece, Rees, Rheinallt, Rhisiart, Sawyl, Siarl, Sieffre, Siôn, Siôr, Taffy, Trevor, Tudwal, Ulster, Vaughan, Woderic, Wynn, Yura, Yuri, Zahkar, Zinovyy.

Female Names

Acibella, Adalaís, Aderyn, Aelís, Aerona, Aeronwen, Aeronwy, Agnete, Agueta, Aidelina, Aimelina, Aimengarda, Ainés, Aizivella, Alaïda, Alamana, Alamanda, Alaria, Alasais, Albèrta, Albbea, Aliç, Alina, Aliona, Alis, Allissa, Alla, Allynna, Amadeta, Amadina, Amaneva, Amelha, Amfosa, Anderequina, Amwroa, Andriva, Angharad, Anwen, Arianwen, Astèr, Avrora, Brayda, Bruneta, Bethan, Betrys, Blodeuyn, Blodwen, Branwen, Briallen, Bron, Bronwen, Cadi, Carys, Catrin, Ceinwen, Ceridwen, Cristyn, Dairida, Delyth, Dilwen, Dilys, Dylis, Efa, Eiluned, Eira, Eirlys, Eirwen, Elain, Elen, Eleri, Elin, Eluned, Enfys, Enid, Esyllt, Eurwen, Ffion, Fflur, Ffraid, Gaenor, Gaynor, Gladys, Gwasgida, Gwawr, Gwenda, Gwenfrewi, Gwenllian, Hefina, Heledd, Herna, Heulwen, Llewela, Lowri, Luned, Mair, Mallt, Megan, Meinir, Melianda, Mererid, Murwenna, Myf, Myfanwy, Nesta, Nia, Non, Olwen, Olwin, Olwyn, Owena, Rhiannyd, Rhodd, Rhosyn, Rowenna, Shan, Safana, Sali, Seirian, Siany, Siôna, Sioned, Sirioull, Siwan, Siswan, Soffi, Sulwen, Tangwen, Tanwen, Teiddwen, Tegan, Tesna, Tesni, Tonwen, Tudful, Tydfil, Tybie,

Tyleri, Valmai, Winnifred, Wenlo, Ynyra, Ystradwel, Yyulia, Zlata.

Unisex Names

Ael, Aeron, Afon, Aiwen, Alaric, Aman, Aouregan, Avel, Awen, Ballay, Beuzi, Biavili, Bieda, Bielak, Biernat, Bili, Blach, Brer, Bryn, Cbarr, Caron, Cedny, Celyn, Ceri, Chil, Cohhôn, Conan, Connan, Corsen, Dacre, Dahud, Danys, Daneys, Deri, Deryn, Dormyn, Devrig, Efflam, Eginer ,Eilir, Eram, Elliw, Elwy, Elouan, Emilian, Emilion, Eodez, Eryl, Eryr, Eirian, Eurfon, Eurliw. Ellis, Fragan, Grisial, Godygi, Guerdy, Gwenffrwd, Gyluennm, Irroputt, Hafgan, Hydref, Jediah, Labrynt, Lekk, Medi, Mellangel, Moergan, Mur, Piya, Reese, Rheece, Rhion, Rispat, Tathan, Tegeirian, Teifi, Til, Tirion, Telor, Uanog, Yuz, Wissimw.

Surnames

Among common folk, ethnically Gemmerians traditionally bore only a single surname, usually linked to trade, place of origin, or a notable traits (e.g., *Ulster Cfwl, Eira Canwrrhew*). Nobles, by contrast, employed a system of four surnames: two inherited from the father and two from the paternal grandfather.

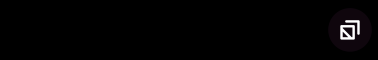
Following Nilfgaard's conquest, naming practices shifted —but not too much— under imperial influence. A census measure for the ethnically Gemmerians introduced soon after the annexation added the Nilfgaardian connector taám (the) into Gemmerian records as a way of identifying occupations. Thus, a man once known as Bram Pysgotwr (Bram Fisherman) would be recorded as Bram taám Pysgotwr (Bram the Fisherman). Over time, this bureaucratic marker became formalized as part of the surname itself, carried down through generations.

The nobility adapted in a similar fashion, combining taám with the Nilfgaardian marker var (of the family of) to elevate both meaning and prestige. Since Gemmerian noble surnames already functioned like common names—but in a more elaborate fashion—the imperialized versions turned into full honorifics. For example, Aeron Rhyfelwr Doeth Pwerus Beiddgar became Aeron taám Rhyfelwr Doeth var Pwerus Beiddgar (Aeron the Wise Warrior of the family of the Mighty and the Bold).

Amddiffynnydd, Arnal, Astruc, Aubanel, Banister, Barbaraidd, Barthe, Bayle, Boyer, Bridgen, Canwrrhew, Cabrol, Carpentier, Cazalet, Créac'h, Corre, Couderc, Cefylmarchog, Crefftwr, Crydd, Cwfl, Dagorn, Derfel, Dŵrtywyll, Echrade, Eiraglas, Ellis, Eryrddofi, Estreicher, Fabre, Faur, Faure, Fauré, Fichen, Floc'h, Follorou, Fripp, Fychan, Gach, Gasquet, Goarant, Guillou, Gweinydd, Gower, Gwneuthurwrffyrdd, Huws, Jach, Jannowitz, Kolton, Klich, Kerguelen, Laborde, Labourdette, Lach, Llich, Lloltt, La Pointe, Le Corre, Le Gall, Le Nevé, Méheut, Maddux, Mekesser, Michta, Mêlllaw, Morwr, Orkan, Prosser, Quillévéré, Raggon, Raspail, Rhyddgaeaf, Rhyfelwr, Sapir, Silifant, Strauss, Tafarnwr, Teissier, Tisseyre, Ysbeiliwr, Ymladdwr, Ysgrifenydd, Unig, Unllygad, Urvoas, Wahl, Weiss, Wogel, Wyn, Zak, Zilber, Zunz, Zweig

Geography

Gemmeria is a predominantly flat land, with the only true elevations being the Tir Tochair Mountains in the east, the Giant Shoulders to the west, and the Black Mountains to the south. Its landscapes divide into four main zones: the coastal regions along the west, center, and east (shaped both by the Great Sea and the inland Sea of Gales, with the Giant Shoulders further dividing the western coast from the interior), dense forests in the north, wide steppe lands across the center, and arid, rocky hills in the south—save for the Black Mountains.



Map of the Sea of Gales

This relative flatness has long marked Gemmeria's history as a land prone to conflict and endemic brutality, its open terrain offering few natural barriers that might otherwise hinder warring factions.

Unlike its northern and southern neighbors, Gemmeria has no great metropolises nor grand highways. Instead, as mentioned before, its settlements cluster in towns and long chains of villages, connected by well-worn dirt roads. Some of the southernmost routes were originally laid in stone by the ancient Imperium, but over the centuries they were broken down into earth to facilitate the spread of new settlements.

The province's western boundary lies along the Great Sea, with the Black Mountains marking the divide from coastal Etolia. More or less at its heart rests the Sea of Gales (Gemmerian: *Môr vid Gwynt*), an inland sea that effectively splits the territory in two. To the east rise the Tir Tochair Mountains, while the northern frontier runs along the Im Lebar River, which separates Gemmeria from Ebbing and Maecht. To the south—alongside the already mentioned Etolia—the province borders the desert province of Magne, from which it is also separated by the Black Mountains.

Government

The government of Gemmeria is feudal in nature, but markedly decentralized due to its origin as a group of various small states, often tribal in character. Though a hierarchy exists on paper, in practice the nobles stand as equals among themselves, bound more by custom and shifting alliances than by rigid chains of command. Even after Nilfgaard's conquest, this system endured, though reshaped into a two-tiered structure: at the top stood the Imperial governor; beneath him, the puppet king and the Gemmerian nobility.

During its time as an independent kingdom, Gemmeria preserved many native titles inherited from its small-state origins who were recovered slowly but steady, after the Sangreal Empire left the region. Yet the soft influence of the Imperium in the distant past—and later, two centuries under the Sangreal Empire—left their mark. Several foreign titles were adopted and became standard. The title of king itself entered usage, modeled after the Sangreal use of rex as the imperator-equivalent of the old Imperium. Likewise, duke was incorporated, in this case a derivation adopted from the Imperium title dux, the Scholar's Tongue word for *leader*.

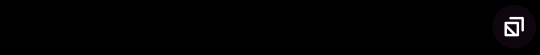
Still, not all local ranks were lost. Some endured alongside the imported titles. Among the most notable was Arglwyddbachytir (little lord of the land), infamous among foreigners for its daunting pronunciation, roughly equivalent to a count or baron elsewhere.

After Nilfgaard's conquest in 1226, the province came to function in a semi-autonomous fashion. The imperial governor oversaw all matters of general importance, while the puppet king managed the rest, consulting the governor whenever a decision risked contradicting the Empire's will. In practice this arrangement resembled less a province and more a hybrid between a protectorate and a vassal state, though officially it was recorded as a province of Nilfgaard.

History

Pre-Human Times (2700 B.R -230s B.R)

The first known inhabitants of Gemmeria are believed to have been gnomes, owing to the proximity of the Tir Tochair Mountains. Who established a series of communal colonies, which eventually coalesced into their own state under a parliamentary monarchy once the dwarves arrived and forged a strong alliance with them.



One of the various abandoned dwarven forges present in Gemmeria

There is also evidence of vran presence in the region, though only temporary—likely during their gradual migration northward.

Little remains of the old gnome-dwarf state. Its legacy can still be traced in certain ravines thought to be of artificial origin—likely ancient open-air mines—and in artifacts that survived into later centuries, such as dwarven forges. This state endured until the Age of Migration and the arrival of the elves. When both the Aen Seidhe and Aen Elle came to the Old Continent and the latter chose to establish part of the elven macro-civilization in Gemmeria, founding the Kingdom of Cannterr Gwalodd—or Cantre'r Gwaelod, as it would later be remembered in the legends of other worlds.

Once consolidated, this kingdom launched a campaign against the previous inhabitants. This war, later remembered simply as The Ordering, saw the massacre of the old peoples and the enslavement of the survivors. The victory in this war, marking the beginning of it´s Golden Age. Cannterr Gwalodd would last in this state, until the Aen Elle were summoned by their Aen Saevherne and, for the most part, departed in search of a more *interesting universe*—ultimately reaching Faërie.

Only a small remnant of Aen Elle remained behind, arrogantly believing themselves capable of maintaining control over the enslaved population. however, due to the departure, Cannter

Gwalodd was, unbeknownst, entering in a age of decline until it´s fall, as the numbers of elves dwindled through the previous departure, the latter called Alderwalk, and other attritions, and the number of slaves multiplied, century after century, the last ones eventually rose in a massive rebellion. Around the 230s B.R.—shortly before the First Conjunction of the Spheres and the arrival of humans—the uprising finally happened and destroyed the elven kingdom once and for all.

The few surviving elves were driven into hiding in Gemmeria's scarce mountain ranges, where over time they intermingled with the newly arrived humans on many levels. From this mingling arose the second wave of early ancestors of the modern Gemmerians.

The First Humans and the Great War (230s B.R. — 4 A.R.)

The first humans in Gemmeria are believed to have appeared in the mountains—specifically in the Black Mountains and the Giant Shoulders. A smaller number appeared also in the south, but not in the mountains, these would be the ones who would became the first tribes of Gemmeria, and these would later become the founders of what is known in detail later as the Imperium.

Confused and disoriented in this strange new world, they were, according to Gemmerian legend, aided by the *dynion vid gwynt* (men of the wind)—the Aen Elle who survived the fall of their kingdom. In exchange for human aid to reclaim what had once been theirs, the elves offered them knowledge and leadership, since, unlike with the races they had once enslaved, the Aen Elle could not repeat the practice, as they needed the men because of the sheer numbers, and also, this same sheer numbers made possible their extinction if resisted.

And thus, both sides bound themselves by what Gemmerian folklore remembers as the Pact of the Seventh Night. From then on, the elves became both leaders and equals to their human allies. They taught the humans all they knew, save one secret: magic. Believing mankind too brutal and warlike, the Aen Elle withheld it, fearing it might one day be turned against them. (A fear later proven justified in the North, when the Aen Seidhe taught the Nordlings magic, to disastrous consequence.)

Together they waged the conflict later called The Great War, battling the once-enslaved nonhumans who had seized control of the former elven lands. The war dragged on for centuries. Which only made the Aen Elle remnants draw closer to the humans, both through the loss of their own leaders and through sheer proximity. In time, they disappeared, their blood mingled with that of their allies.

Some scholars argue that before the Aen Elle fully disappeared, they did in fact teach Gemmerians magic. Yet this knowledge was later lost through conflicts or corrupted due to fragmentation.

The Great War finally ended around the 2nd century A.R., when the Gemmerians more or less fulfilled their oath to their elven forebears. Though defeated, instead of being enslaved again as the Aen Elle would have like it, the surviving nonhumans were allowed to live as near-equals

among the Gemmerians, recognition earned by the ferocity with which they had fought. Around this time, perhaps unintentionally, the last native dwarves of Gemmeria are thought to have been exterminated.

But peace did not last. Without their Aen Elle leaders, the dream of restoring the lost kingdom faded into myth. The humans divided among themselves. From unity sprang rivalry, and from rivalry, tribalization, and from tribalization, tribes, and from tribes, more and more tribes, and thus violence, and from violence, many wars. By the 5th century B.R. these conflicts had given rise to a patchwork of small states across the land.

At some during this period, some of this small states, attempted to model themselves upon their southern relatives of the Imperium, imitating its structure. Others sought to destroy it. The clashes with the latter became known as the Savage Wars. In the end, most attempts ended in stalemate or outright defeat, with many Gemmerian states reduced to client polities of the Imperium, whose advantage lay in its earlier mastery of organized magic.

This situation—marked by intermittent conflict—lasted for centuries, even after the Imperium's collapse. Only in the 9th century A.R., when the Sangreal armies marched south, did Gemmeria's political landscape change decisively, as the dynasty subjugated the region.

The Imperium (130s B.R. – 790s A.R.)

Following the arrival of humans into the Old Continent, as mentioned earlier, various tribes organized themselves across the areas bordering what is now Etolia and Gemmeria. Over roughly a century, these scattered groups coalesced into what came to be called the Imperium —the first true empire in human history. It must not be confused with its namesake, the Nilfgaardian Empire, though the latter would draw partial inspiration from this ancient polity.

The Imperium is believed to have originated near the frontier of modern Gemmeria and Etolia, with its earliest recorded capital located in Magne. From there it expanded steadily southward, reaching its zenith in the region that would later become Vicovaro. Absorbing local tribes and subjugating non-human groups along the way, the Imperium's greatest strength layed, as mentioned before, in its early discovery of magic and thus, the organized use of mages. These were not merely advisors but a semi-autonomous, wielding enough power that even emperors had *to petition r*ather than command them. It was in this period that the first "spellswords" appeared in recorded history.

The Imperium's most enduring legacy, however, was its language—later remembered as the Scholar's Tongue (*Schola Linguarum*). After the Imperium's collapse, the language survived as a lingua franca along the western coast for centuries, shaping diplomacy, academia, and magical study across both the North and Nilfgaard. The first Gemmerian tribes, though not part of the Imperium proper, were nfluenced by it, with many of the states they founded modeled on the Imperium's image, often reduced after contact with it, to client countries.

This partially explains the peculiar layering of toponymy in Gemmeria: southern names such as La Pointe alongside northern ones like Kharkiv, reflecting the mingling of the Scholar's Tongue,

Elder Speech inheritance left by the elves, and the Common Nordling Tongue.

By the 760s A.R., Nordling newcomers from the north had founded proto-kingdoms of their own. By the 790s, these had become powerful nation-states—Kaedwen, Temeria, and Redania—and began pressing southward, founding many states, along them, Nazair, Metinna, Maecht, and Ebbing. The Imperium, already in decline, shrank to a rump-state in Etolia before dissolving altogether. During this period, Nordling colonists tried to conquer Gemmeria but were expelled south; only a handful remained as captives or slaves, with many intermingling with the locals and forming the third wave of the early ancestors of the modern Gemmerians.

The Sangreal Empire (9th – 11th Century A.R.)

Centuries later, between the 9th and 11th centuries A.R., the lands of Gemmeria once more fell under foreign dominion. At this time, the ruling Sangreal dynasty of what would much later become Toussaint forged an empire in imitation of the extinct Imperium, stretching from western Franq (later misidentified by Nordling historians as Haakland) across Toussaint and deep into Gemmeria, nearly to the borders of Magne and Etolia.

Gemmeria was conquered in what came to be known as the Blood Wars, a series of campaigns against its various states. Disunity left them vulnerable, and one by one they fell to the Sangreal hosts. Though conquest was bitter, it brought many innovations previously unknown to the Gemmerian peoples. When the Sangreal Empire itself collapsed in the 11th century, Gemmeria—hardened and paradoxically strengthened by its subjugation—emerged more unified than ever before.

The first coat of arms known for "unified Gemmeria"

At some point during this period, after the Sangreal conquest, Gemmeria would adopt their most famous coat of arms. The one with a boar´s head in a diamonds-shaped black and red field, with two or four tusks at it´s side, believed to be based on the tribal coat of arms used by the first king of what would be later Toussaint, king Ludovic, due to boars being very common in that region, which was later used as the coat of arms of the Sangreal Empire that his son would found in the 9th century. With the colors being the differentiator with other provinces of the Sangreal Empire.

This newfound cohesion gave birth to the Kingdom of Gemmeria, a polity strong enough not only to launch its own invasions into neighboring territories but also to resist, for nearly two centuries, and even to attempt to conquer Nilfgaard during the reign of Emperor Torres. That independence ended only in 1226, when the black banners finally subdued the country, making it the Empire's second province, following the conquest of Etolia a decade earlier in 1216.

The Birth of the United Kingdom of Gemmeria (Mid-10th Century - Early 11th Century A.R.)

The fall of the Sangreal Empire was not sudden or violent, but gradual and almost quiet. It stemmed largely from the empire's dwindling mineral wealth—a decline that would, in

centuries to come, force Toussaint to shift its economy toward viticulture. Added to this was the fact that Sangreal never fully controlled its heartland, and rival powers around it had grown far stronger. Maintaining its vast territories became unsustainable without crippling debts to hire foreign soldiers.

Thus, from the mid-10th century A.R. onward to it´s fall in the 11th century A.R, the Sangreal Empire steadily shrank, its borders contracting decade by decade until, by its end, the empire controlled barely a quarter of what would later be the frontiers of Toussaint.

In Gemmeria, the empire's withdrawal left a dangerous vacuum. Several of the Oculuses—the equivalent of lesser lords and regional governors under Sangreal rule—rose in revolt against the Custos, the provincial governor. This conflict became known as the November Uprising, in which the Oculuses sought to topple the imperial administration and carve Gemmeria once more into a patchwork of competing petty states.

Yet the Custos' government, led by Koddam Barbaraidd, a descendant of the royal line of one of the most powerful pre-Sangreal states, held firm. At the Battle of Im Lebar, Barbaraidd's forces crushed the rebellion, ensuring continuity rather than collapse. In the aftermath, he laid the foundations of a feudal but decentralized monarchy: a system designed both to preserve the advantages Sangreal administration had brought and to appease the newly entrenched Oculuses who had inherited their position soon after from those killed in the battle by granting them hereditary status rather than elective as it has happened back under Sangreal rule.

Within three generations, this arrangement had fully evolved into the decentralized feudal model that would define Gemmeria for centuries to come until the Nilfgaardian rule finally arrived. At some point during this period, Gemmeria would adopt their second most famous coat of arms, the tribal one with a brown horse head, in a white field, believed to be in origin, the personal coat of arms of Koddam.

Consolidation of the Unified Kingdom and Golden Age (Mid-11th Century - Mid-12th Century A.R)

At the beginning of the century, in 1005, a faction of dissident witchers of the School of the Griffin came to Gemmeria and took over an abandoned dwarven fortress, which they named Kaer Nytk, or *Fortress of the Rocky Hill* in Elder Speech, founding the School of the Hawk and thus, becoming the official witchers of the kingdom, dealing with all the monsters present in Gemmeria. Sometime between 1005 and 1010, those witchers would come into contact with the Gemmerian sorceress Eira Frostsinger, who helped them recreate the mutation formula, definitively establishing the school as an institution by allowing the creation of more Hawk Witchers. However, this also enabled Eira, after the conquest, to create the infamous monster Maugrim and doom the school to extinction due to its association with her.

Around the middle of the 11th century, the unified kingdom of Gemmeria would consolidate, beginning when the grandson of Koddam, Huw Barbaraidd, carried out the last parts of the transition from independent province of the Sangreal Empire

into a kingdom. Establishing his family's tribal coat of arms, the horse's head, as the kingdom's official coat of arms and flag.

This century was also the golden age of the kingdom. Since, by exploiting its mines, Gemmeria grew rich by selling all kinds of metals (but especially dimeritium to its neighbors). Acquiring such a powerful influence that it would become one of the great powers of the western coast before the Nilfgaard.

The coat of arms of unified Gemmeria

Boostered by this riches, and wanting to create an empire of it´s own, in this, and later centuries, Gemmeria also carried out invasions against neighboring countries—some repelled, others successful. A notable example of the latter was the conquest of Magne, which for 50 years remained under Gemmerian control, until the failed invasion carried out against Nilfgaard at the beginning of Emperor Torres's reign in the 12th century caused devastating losses, which the Magnese seized upon to rebel and regain their independence.

This ultimately triggered the decline of the kingdom, sowing the seeds for its later conquest in the 13th century.

The Beginning of the End of Independence (Mid-12th – Early 13th Century A.R)

The losses caused by the failed invasion of Nilfgaard only began to reveal the kingdom's decline from the mid-12th century onward. When Gemmeria gradually lost the territories it had seized in earlier conquests (aside from the already mentioned independence of Magne), unable to maintain them not for lack of wealth, but for lack of men. At the same time, its external influence waned: what had once been regarded as a hard southern land, respected for its riches and warriors, came to be dismissed as little more than a "p*rimitive southern kingdom of no great importance,*" as it was reflected in conversations recorded within the Brotherhood of Sorcerers in the North.

As Gemmeria's prestige eroded, Nilfgaard's influence increased steadily. For a time, several southern dukes held back imperial ambitions, but true to the Gemmerian way of life, they eventually perished in violent feuds, leaving the country without the protective buffer that had kept Nilfgaard at bay.

By the late 12th century, under the poor governance of one of its kings, Moergan Zak, Gemmeria had fallen into heavy debt. In desperation, the crown sought a loan from Nilfgaard. The Empire nearly granted it—on the condition of being allowed full exploitation of certain dimeritium mines. Though incompetent, the Gemmerian ruler understood the strategic value of dimeritium and refused. Instead, they raised export prices of the material, provoking anger among their neighbors, and most dangerously, Nilfgaard itself.

This, in turn, fed the Empire's resolve to seize the province outright. Before the Nilfgaardian invasion of 1226, Gemmeria was further weakened by the so-called Dual War: a retaliatory

strike launched from the northern border by Ebbing and Maecht together. It was a lightning war of raids and pillaging, intended to force Gemmeria to lower the price of the dimeritium. Though the Gemmerians eventually prevailed, the cost of victory was devastatingly high, which despite not wanting to, finally forced them to lowering the export prices of the metal, as their northern and southern neighbours wanted.

The Nilfgaardian Conquest of Gemmeria (March-Summer of 1226 A.R.)

Still weakened by the Dual War and with the southern dukes—who had long acted as a counterweight to Imperial influence—dead, Gemmeria finally fell, as mentioned earlier, in 1226 under the young yet already formidable imperial machinery of Fergus var Emreis, son of Torres, the first Emperor.

Fergus, both eager and fearful in equal measure—eager for Gemmeria's rich dimeritium veins and fearful that the kingdom might once again raise prices or even launch another invasion as in centuries past—delivered a speech before the Imperial Senate. Though by then a merely ceremonial body, the Senate approved his declaration that Gemmeria posed a looming threat which, left unchecked, would sooner or later plunge the rest of the southern territories of the western coast into poverty and ruin.

With this political façade secured, Fergus secured the support of the Imperial governor of Etolia and the Duke of Vicovaro, both of whom joined his plan without hesitation. Thus, in March 1226, with the coming of spring, the conquest of Gemmeria began, employing the same tactics used ten years earlier to subjugate Etolia.

Yet this time, the strategy failed. To the surprise of the Imperials, Gemmeria resisted. The war dragged on until the summer of that year, when at last the capital, Goleunimawr, fell. In the intervening months, however, the Empire was forced to adapt. Out of sheer necessity, its generals developed what became known as the Balad'orlog (Nilfgaardian: *Storm War or Lightning War*) —a campaign of brutal devastation, inspired by highly electric thunderstorms, that at the human level bordered on systematic genocide.

This was carried out most fiercely in the rocky southern regions where the dimeritium mines lay. There, the Imperial army nearly exterminated the population, leaving little more than scattered goat herders in some areas. The effect was twofold: demoralization and alienation. Some Gemmerian forces surrendered simply to end the slaughter; others splintered apart, reverting to their traditional style of warfare, attacking piecemeal rather than united. This proved disastrous. Divided, they were defeated step by step until, in the fateful summer of 1226, the Imperials stormed Goleunimawr, and the reigning king, Astruc Créac'h—later remembered as *Astruc the Shamer*—surrendered, bringing the conquest to its end.

In the aftermath, Gemmeria's court sorceress, Eira Frostsinger, fled into the Giant's Shoulders mountains. Drawing on the alchemical knowledge she had gained through long collaboration with the witchers of the School of the Hawk, as mentioned earilier, she created the infamous werewolf-like monster known as Maugrim.

The Hawks themselves had also been targeted by Imperial forces during the war, who believed they might serve as Gemmerian elite troops. The survivors—barely ten witchers— later refused to fight alongside Eira, which led the mage to created her infamous monster, and thus, with this refusal, the Hawk Witchers sealed their fate. Since, after Eira´s death, the Hawks were branded as collaborators by the Imperial government for her use of witcher mutagenic knowledge in creating the monster. Bounties were issued across the new province, leading to their near-extermination. Only a handful who fled Gemmeria in time escaped annihilation.

The Terror of Goleunimawr (Summer – Late Autumn of 1226 A.R)

Not long after the fall of Goleunimawr, the capital itself was plunged into dread. From her refuge in a cave in the Giant Shoulders, the fugitive court sorceress Eira Frostsinger twisted the alchemical knowledge she had once used to aid the Hawk Witchers to create more witchers, into creating a mockery of life itself: a towering, werewolf-like monster she named Maugrim.

The beast began preying first upon travelers outside the town, then upon the townsfolk themselves. Each month, five or six people vanished. When the town guard responded, their efforts met swift disaster. A squad of six men disappeared entirely—only bloodstains and a shattered sword were ever found. A second party of twelve, armed with torrwrs, was dispatched along the trail of blood. They fared little better; only one soldier returned, battered and half-mad. He swore the culprit was none other than Eira, who had turned against her king and the Nilfgaardians alike, threatening to "*rain hell on the land*" unless Astruc expelled the Imperial presence. According to the survivor, Maugrim could tear off a man's arm "*as one pulls the leg from a roast chicken*."

Last Eira portrait, a few weeks before her death

With panic spreading, and the School of the Hawk nearly extinct from the recent war, King Astruc Créac'h appealed to the nearer School of the Viper. Three days later, the witchers answered, sending one of their newest graduates: Gerring of Kharkiv.

After agreeing upon his fee, Gerring entered the Giant Shoulders in search of the monster. His first encounter ended in near disaster. Though he had faced a pair of werewolves before in his first contract, Maugrim proved taller, faster, and vastly stronger than any common werewolf. Worse still, despise being an alchemical creation, the witcher's steel blade was useless. Forced to retreat, he blinded the monster with a bomb and stumbled into an abandoned dwarven mine, where he found something useful to create a weapon to defeat Maugrim. In its silent forge and foundry, he labored a full day and night, fashioning a silver sword of his own. He named it Maugrim—in grim anticipation of the foe it was destined to slay.

With his new weapon, Gerring returned to the hunt. He infiltrated Eira's cavern while the monster was abroad. Some tales claim he seduced her and, after an intimate encounter, he slit her throat as she slept; others that he attacked immediately, as he arrived to the cave by night, finding her already asleep. Either way, Eira's life ended before she could summon her creation. Maugrim returned soon after, and the ensuing battle shook the cavern. At length, the Viper struck the killing blow.

By dawn, Gerring returned to Goleunimawr bearing the severed heads of both sorceress and monster. He was paid his fee and departed his homeland, never to return, setting his feet firmly upon The Path.

In the aftermath, Nilfgaard judged King Astruc's handling of the crisis a failure and abolished the Gemmerian monarchy for a few years. At the same time, as mentioned earlier, bounties were issued against the surviving Hawk Witchers due to their association with Eira, condemning, as mentioned before, their school to extinction.

The Mage Rebellion and Its Aftermath (1226–1230 A.R)

The death of Eira did not bring only ruin—it also sparked defiance. Many of her fellow mages, who had either remained neutral during the war or even welcomed the Empire at first, were inspired to take up arms. When Nilfgaard soon required all Gemmerian magic users to register with the Imperial Service, a large number refused. Instead, they rebelled, launching a guerrilla war that spread across Gemmeria.

This unrest continued until 1230, when the so-called Usurper ascended to the throne of Nilfgaard. As one of his first decisive measures beyond the Imperial heartlands, he acted to extinguish the Gemmerian Mage resistance. Working alongside the professional mage-hunter Isaiah Coehoorn, he founded and financed a new organisation appropriately named the Mage Hunters. Their task was to track down unregistered magic users and deliver them to the capital for trial.

One of the many Nilfgaardian Mage Hunters sended to Gemmeria

The model drew partial inspiration from the Praetorship, the magical policing body once established by the Brotherhood of Sorcerers in the North. To equip the new force, the Usurper summoned the wealthiest mine-owners of the Empire and offered an exclusive contract to whichever could uncover the largest new seam of dimeritium. The only viable deposits were located in Gemmeria.

Thus armed and funded, the Mage Hunters launched their campaign in the summer of 1230. By autumn's end, it was over, and every rogue Gemmerian mage was brought before what came to be known as the Golden Trials. Most were condemned and executed for treason against the Empire. The most infamous of these cases was that of Harri Crochenydd, whose delusions of grandeur—fueled by a striking birthmark—made his downfall a popular spectacle.

Only a handful survived. Those few who repented at the last moment and finally registered in the Imperial Service were spared execution, spending several years in prison before being allowed to return to their ordinary lives.

Transformation into a Semi-Autonomous Province (1230s A.R)

After Fergus's conquest, Gemmeria was treated as just another province of the Empire. A governor, as mentioned before, was installed to oversee it when the last Gemmerian king was considered a failure, and the process of Nilfgaardization began.

What the Imperials did not anticipate, however, was that this would trigger the so-called Great Rebellions: seven major uprisings, each following the other in quick succession. Though ultimately suppressed, they exacted a heavy toll in men and resources, threatening Nilfgaard's control over its newly won province.

To avoid losing Gemmeria—so valuable for its strategic, economic, and anti-magical significance—the province's monarchy was restored under the reign of the so-called bastard son of Fergus, later remembered as the Usurper. Along with this restoration came a measure of semi-autonomy. To the Empire's surprise, this solution proved effective: no further uprisings followed, and Gemmeria remained stable.

Thus, the province became a curious hybrid—officially a province, but in practice a hybrid between a vassal state and a protectorate. This model would later be adapted in some of Nilfgaard's more northern conquests.

So successful was the arrangement that even Emhyr var Emreis, who so despised the Usurper that he erased his very name from history, nevertheless maintained Gemmeria's status unchanged.

Language

The Gemmerians speak a tongue of their own, one that stands apart from both the Common Nordling Tongue and the Elder Speech–derived Nilfgaardian. Linguists trace it to several intertwined roots: the speech of the first humans who appeared in the region, the language of the ancient Imperium (later known as the Scholar's Tongue), Common Nordling, and a heavy stratum of Elder Speech.

The prevailing theory holds that Gemmerian is a hybrid language, essentially a creole that long ago matured into a fully developed tongue. Its grammar appears to stem from a fusion of three early human idioms, while its lexicon derives almost 90% from Elder Speech—particularly from the Aen Elle dialect once spoken in the region. This makes it a rare case of a human hybrid language whose vocabulary stems so overwhelmingly from a single source.

This explains even better Gemmeria's peculiar and seemingly inconsistent toponymy mentioned prior. Place-names often reveal mismatched strata of history and language, such

as Kharkiv (of uncertain etymology, neither Elder Speech, Nordling, nor Nilfgaardian) or La Pointe (borrowed from Common Nordling, meaning *the Point*).

Owing to the Sangreal Empire's two centuries of dominion and the subsequent influxes of Nordling settlers seeking opportunity in the northern parts of the region, the Common Nordling Tongue became widely spoken as a second language. Even after Nilfgaard's conquest in 1226, it retained a strong presence.

By contrast, Nilfgaardian was formally imposed as the official language of governance, but its adoption among the populace remained shallow. Most Gemmerians, fiercely attached to their native speech and their Nordling-influenced bilingualism, spoke Nilfgaardian only when necessary. For their part, the imperial governors generally turned a blind eye to this "*minor*" defiance, so long as the province remained efficient, loyal, and willing to undergo desbarbarization without losing its "*unique character*."

In practice, this meant tolerating the Gemmerians' famed brutality, which the Empire found all too useful in war. This was epitomized by the Gemmerian Pacifiers, a notorious mercenary group whose ruthless methods became legendary. Emperor Emhyr var Emreis himself frequently dispatched them to crush uprisings in the Empire's newly conquered territories, where their ferocity and lack of restraint served as both sword and warning.

Alongside Gemmerian, Common Nordling, and Nilfgaardian, the remote corners of the province preserved until as late as 1165 the dialect of Elder Speech known as Ellylon, once spoken by the Aen Elle who had ruled Gemmeria and other parts of the southern western coast in pre-human times. For centuries, the dialect survived relatively intact as a part of the broader legacy of the mixing between humans and Gemmerian Elle, passed down within isolated communities.

Ellylon drew considerable scholarly interest from abroad, especially from Nordling academics, who traveled to Gemmeria in those ages when it was still spoken by humans. Their aim was to decipher the scarce traces the Aen Elle had left in what would later become the Northern Kingdoms before migrating southward.

Over time, however, its speakers steadily dwindled. As the united Kingdom of Gemmeria came under increasing influence from foreign powers, the dialect grew stigmatized as a relic of "*darker times.*" By the early 13th century, Ellylon had disappeared from Gemmeria, and had nearly died out even among foreign scholars who had once studied it—surviving only among a handful of fluent speakers scattered along the western coast of the Old Continent.

Religion

Unlike the Northern Kingdoms, which largely share a decentralized but recognizable faith, Gemmeria before the Empire was marked by religious fragmentation. The province hosted a myriad of religions that clashed as often as they coexisted—an outcome shaped both by the Gemmerians' own nature and by the diverse influences acting upon them such as geography, sociocultural evolution, and the lingering legacies of earlier powers.

Thus, whole regions worshipped different pantheons. Some venerated the ancient elven gods, while others followed a distinct interpretation of the Nordling pantheon and perhaps even of the half-forgotten deities of the old Imperium. Still others went so far as to revere monsters brought into the world by the First Conjunction, mistaking their sheer might for divine presence. In practice, nearly every imaginable form of worship could be found within Gemmeria's borders.

A floor mosaic representing the Great Star

This religious diversity, paradoxically, served as a brake upon Gemmerian aggression. For centuries it prevented the Gemmerian states and later unified kingdom from waging constant campaigns abroad, turning invasions into sporadic outbursts rather than daily reality.

One of the most widespread cults before the coming of Nilfgaard was that of the Great Star. As its name suggests, this faith centered on the worship of a single celestial body, which Gemmerians believed guided them in war. Warriors invoked it during night raids, claiming its light pointed the way. Some later scholars argue that the "*Great Star*" was none other than the pole star used by sailors and travelers across the world.

With Nilfgaard's conquest, however, the Great Sun was imposed as the sole official religion. Worshippers of the old Gemmerian deities were persecuted—imprisoned, and in many cases executed. Yet even this did not fully extinguish the old ways. Instead, many native cults adapted, blending elements of their religions with the imperial faith. This syncretism, though imperfect, was tolerated by the Empire so long as it strengthened loyalty and did not openly challenge the primacy of the Sun.

Monsters

The Conjunction(s), as in other parts of the world, brought to Gemmeria numerous beings from alien realities—later called monsters. In Gemmeria's case, most of these are unique to the region, while only a minority being a direct consequence of it, or a consequence of migration from elsewhere after first arriving in the world.

As a result, various forms of therianthropy are as common here as werewolves or werebears in the North. The most widespread are suscrofathropy (werepigs) and bubalutropy (werebuffalos). The former even holds folkloric weight thanks to tales of a pirate sorceress fond of seducing and cursing men into swine, said to live upon and rule one of the Sister Islands—or Chain Islands, named for their closeness and chain-like shape—in the easternmost part of the Sea of Gales.

Among unique monsters, some of the most notable include the lunar kelpie of the Sea of Gales, known locally as algâu drwg (evil seaweed), its harmless appearance of floating seaweed

beneath moonlight concealing its deadly nature.

Also feared is the gwilgy, a type of necrophage resembling a dog, far more aggressive than its Nordling counterparts.

The henwon, a monstrous giant swine, was said—by Arnaghad himself, the first witcher ever to slay one—to have "*the strength of three drunk and very enraged chorts*." These monsters became infamous for destroying entire farms and killing both Gemmerian national heroes and witchers alike.

The kattpaluge, a semi-aquatic beast resembling an enormous black cat, unrelated to the panthers of Toussaint or other great felines of the world, is said to haunt the coasts of the Great Sea and the Sea of Gales. It claimed the life of national heroes such as Ogyrw the Skelliger.

After what happened with Eira, it is rumored—but never confirmed—that descendants of her monstrosity still stalk Gemmeria's mountains and forests. These beings are known as maugriams.

Another terror of the Sea of Gales is the affamkû, a massive creature described as a hybrid between beaver and platypus, notorious for sinking large ships without their crews realizing until it is far too late.

The phooca, a common monster in Gemmerian lands

As for monsters shared with other lands, Gemmeria is home to unusually abundant populations of creatures rare in the North: the strong, solitary cousins of the nekkers known as phooca, and the powerful, solitary kin of the vodnik, the marimorgunes.

Among hags, the seas hide the terrifying depth lurkers, the oceanic cousins of the water hag, alongside a hunting variant of the grave hag with semi-necrophage tendencies, called the hunter hag or nallima.

Before their near-extinction, Gemmeria also teemed with red dragons. Today, only their distant cousins supposedly remain: the so-called Gemmerian dragons, in truth closer to wyverns, forktails, or slyzards than to true dragons.

Notable Organizations

- Gemmerian Pacifiers
- Mage Hunters
- School of the Hawk

Notable Locations

Academies

- College of Musical Arts of Kharkiv
- General School of La Pointe
- Goleunimawr Magic Academy
- Kharkiv Magic Academy
- La Pointe Magic Academy

Keeps

- Kaer Nytk

Lighthouses

- Cymér

Temples

- Coram Agh Tera Temple
- Great Star Temple

Towers

- Tower of the Winds

Towns

- Goleunimawr (capital)
- Kharkiv
- Le Corre
- Le Nevé
- La Pointe
- Pasuchel

Seas

- Sea of Gales

Universities

- Goleunimawr University

Villages

- Bexon
- Le Gall
- Ternopyl

Notable People

For a full list of Gemmerians, see Category:Gemmerians.

Aristocracy

- Astruc Créac'h (last king of independent Gemmeria)
- Dairida
- Ponderic
- Pwvyllo II
- Huw Barbaraidd (grandson of Koddam)
- Koddam Barbaraidd (first ruler of unified Gemmeria)
- Moergan Zak (king in the late 12th century)
- Woderic

Knights

- Ulster Cwfl

Mages

- Dormyn of Gemmera
- Eira Canwrrhew
- Harri Crochenydd
- Herna of Gemmeria (mixed ancestry)

Mercenaries

- Dacre Silifant
- Jediah Mekesser

Professional Killers

- Cyprian Fripp "The Elder"
- Cyprian Fripp "The Younger"
- Yuz Jannowitz

Scouts

- Til Echrade

Soldiers

- Bert Bridgen
- Rispat La Pointe

Witchers

- Arnaghad
- Gerring of Kharkiv

- School of the Hawk Witchers

Witcheresses

- Gwasgida

Notable Naturalized People

The existence of naturalized Gemmerians was rare, for the people of Gemmeria were never known for welcoming foreigners with open arms. Only with the arrival of the Nilfgaardian Empire did they, albeit grudgingly, accept Nilfgaardian colonists as naturalized citizens—and only because these settlers quickly adapted to Gemmerian life. Even the practices of "*strengthening*" rarely involved outsiders. Yet this does not mean that cases of naturalization based on such "*strengthening*" did not exist prior to the Imperial conquest, for indeed they did.

Claire de Páogh, one of the most famous naturalized Gemmerians

One positive case was that of Ogyrw—Ogyr in his native tongue—who, as his epithet suggested, hailed from Skellige. He became a minor national hero, surpassed only by Ulster Hood thanks to the latter's deeds and his status as a purely Gemmerian figure.

In contrast, a negative case was that of the Nazairi sorceress Clarabeth Iseabail Nichfhuachd-Fadach de Páogh, also known as Claire de Páogh, or as bitterly nicknamed by the Cidarian mage and professor at Ban Ard, Axel Miguel Esparza—himself a posthumous hero of the Battle of Sodden Hill (1263)—*"The Winter Queen of the South."* According to later Nordling chronicles, Esparza coined the epithet during a conversation with his fling and contemporary at Sodden, Triss Merigold, on the night before the battle. The title stemmed from both her rumored Aen Ghele ancestry and her cold, cutting behavior during their falling out.

Before becoming a sorceress, Clarabeth had been the "*trophy*" of a Gemmerian lord, until a sudden conduit moment unknowingly allowed her to slay her "*master.*" Soon after, she was discovered by Eira Frostsinger, who trained her as her pupil and, in the process, secured her naturalization into Gemmerian society.

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- *Gemmerian Horse Coat of Arms* by SMiki55
- *Nilfgaardian Mage Hunter* by Keenan Coughlin Boyle
- The Gemmerian Alphabet is taken from the Coelbren y Beirdd Alphabet of Edward Williams (1747-1826)

Trivia

- Among the many continuity errors created by Netflix's The Witcher, two of the most subtle yet serious appeared in Season 1, when the Brotherhood of Sorcerers planned to send Yennefer as an advisor to Nilfgaard, describing it as a "*primitive kingdom*."
    - This is doubly incorrect. At that time, the Brotherhood's influence extended only as far as Ebbing, the southernmost limit of the Nordling cultural sphere. More critically, Nilfgaard was neither primitive nor a kingdom by then. It had already transitioned from monarchy to senatorial republic and, ultimately, into an empire—far more advanced than the Nordlings in many respects.
        - Furthermore, given that Netflix's Yennefer was born in 1192 (rather than her canonical 1173), Nilfgaard by the time of her Ascension should already have been an empire—having at minimum conquered Etolia and very likely in the process of annexing, or already having annexed, Gemmeria as well. Since the show never establishes a clear year for her Ascension, this omission makes the timeline even more inconsistent, not only with Sapkowski's books but also with its own inventions and other materials.
            - Had the writers done their research, more viable alternatives within the Brotherhood's reach would have been Maecht—a largely undefined Nordling kingdom in canon—or Gemmeria itself. The latter, though not strictly Nordling, could plausibly have been chosen due to its cultural ties with the North and its distant but viable position in the Brotherhood's sphere of influence. Moreover, it would have fit the description of a "*primitive kingdom where the king wouldn't listen to her,*" in line with the misogynistic traits ascribed to Gemmeria in canon.
- Koddam Barbaraidd is a reference to the character of Conan The Barbarian, also known as Conan The Cimmerian.
- Cymér is a reference to Cimeria, the land described by Homerus as the region of eternal night at the end of the ocean.
- Harri Crochenydd is a dark parody reference to Harry Potter.
- As is evident from their names, most of the Gemmerian monsters are inspired by Welsh folklore.
    - The description of the phooca, however, is canonical, appearing in one of the expansions of *Gwent: The Witcher Card Game*.

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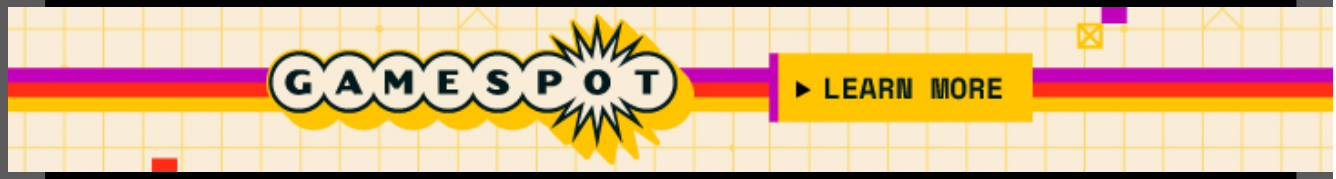

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